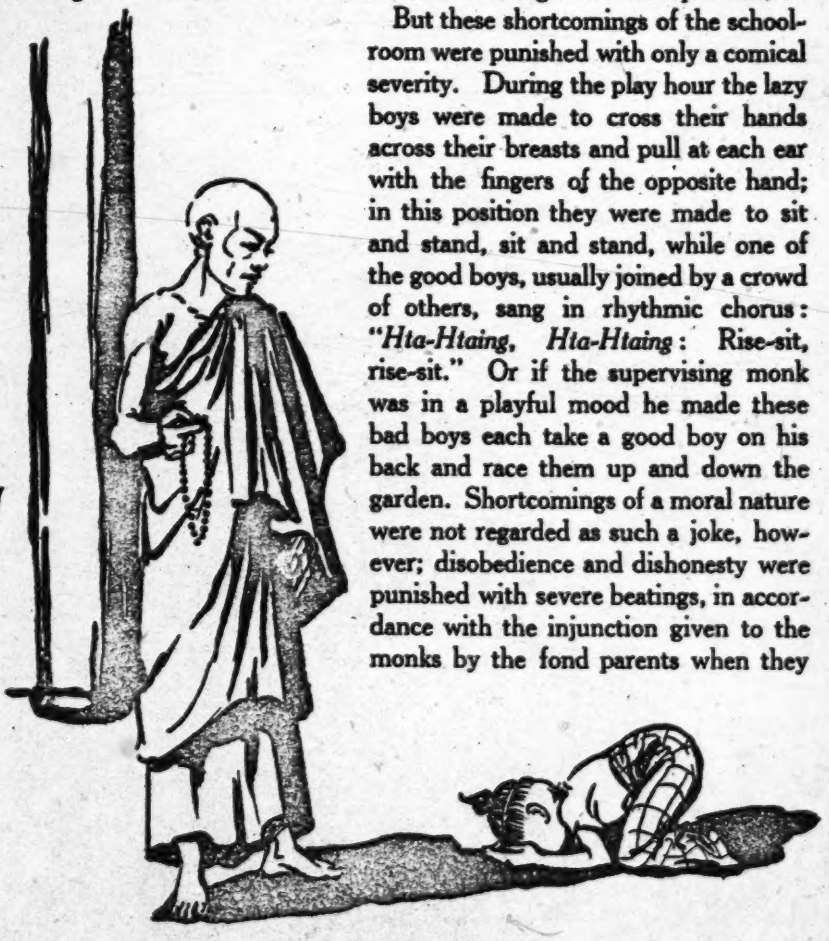
"Your holiness" and themselves as "Your holiness' pupil". The monks addressed the people as *daga*, giver, for they lived by the gifts of the people who donated robes, household articles and other necessities to the monasteries, as good works which brought them merit.

When my grandparents took my father to the kyaung he was a frightened little boy dressed in a cotton skirt called a *longyi*, and a shirt without cuffs and collar; his hair was grown long in the centre and tied in a knot, the sides being cut in a fringe about two inches long all round, and the rest shaved clean, a way of growing hair common to both little boys and girls and enhancing their youthful appearance. He and all the other scholars performed the domestic tasks of the monastery, swept and rubbed the good hard wooden floors, the monastery grounds and pagoda steps, because in these precincts all comers went barefoot; they drew water for drinking, and for the bath of the older monks; they followed the monks on their rounds, two of them bearing a pole on which was slung a covered tray, to take any food donated in excess of what would go into the monk's bowl; they waited on the monks at meals; they learned to read and write, and do simple sums, to recite precepts and religious passages which they shouted at the tops of their childish voices in imitation of the deep intoning voice of the teacher monk, phrase by phrase; in the evenings they went home to eat the meal which the monks abstained from, but came back at sunset to recite the lessons of the day and many past days all over again, to join in the assembled night prayers, to sleep in the monastery and rise again before dawn.

When my father spoke to us of his years in the monastery he always chuckled with delight, in spite of this long list of disciplined tasks. He had the advantage from the first; he was stronger and taller than other boys, and in a system where all learning was by heart he had brilliant memorising powers. The school-room of the kyaung had not the formal atmosphere of the Western school-room with each child at a desk and chair, and a silence except for the voice of teacher or child. The monastery boys all went into the same big room of the monastery, irrespective of age or stage, each with his slate or book, got down on the floor

872 next to their friends, crouched over their work and started to shout out
854 whatever passage was being committed to memory. My father's chuckling
876 was at being able to remember how his voice was lustier than his rival's as he rested on his elbows and knees, and rocked backwards and forwards in rhythm to his chanting, with his legs going as high as he dared, giving surreptitious kicks and nudges to upset the balance of his similarly rocking rival, shouting out the passages all wrong when the supervising monk was at the other end of the room and could not distinguish his voice in the general din, so as to cause his rival to laugh and be reprimanded.



But these shortcomings of the schoolroom were punished with only a comical severity. During the play hour the lazy boys were made to cross their hands across their breasts and pull at each ear with the fingers of the opposite hand; in this position they were made to sit and stand, sit and stand, while one of the good boys, usually joined by a crowd of others, sang in rhythmic chorus: "*Hta-Htaing, Hta-Htaing*: Rise-sit, rise-sit." Or if the supervising monk was in a playful mood he made these bad boys each take a good boy on his back and race them up and down the garden. Shortcomings of a moral nature were not regarded as such a joke, however; disobedience and dishonesty were punished with severe beatings, in accordance with the injunction given to the monks by the fond parents when they handed their children over: "*So yin na na yaik pa:* If he is naughty please beat him hard."

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892 My father spent about five years like this. The hair of his top-knot
561 grew longer year by year and it was nearing the time when he should cut
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it off, offer it to his mother as a tress for her hair-dressing, and have his head shaved and be initiated into the monkhood amidst feasting and rejoicing. This initiation, which every Buddhist boy went through in order to attain his true manhood by wearing the yellow robe, would last only a week or a month, or as long as my father felt the urge to remain in the monastery; for ever if he liked, in which case he would be formally received as an upasin. It was expected, however, that he would leave after a few months and help Grandmother and the aunts with looking after the paddy and the gardens. A rain of accidents upset all these schemes. 872 561 792

When my father was about 14 he was already among the oldest boys in the kyauug, his learning was high and his conduct exemplary. The monks gave him the task of guarding the meat-safe where all the stores of sweetmeats given to the monastery were kept, as well as delicious titbits like the roe of *nga-tha-lauk* fish, and the rich red oil of the heads of lobsters, which were kept over for the meals of the monks on following days. These wire-netted cupboards are called "cat-houses" in Burmese, because they are meant to guard the food from depredations of cats, and they serve the purpose very well, but they could never guard against the appetites of little boys; for my father, even as I knew him in later years, loved people to eat good things and would always soften and allow his companions to have a bit just here and there. He was often scolded for it, but was so well-behaved otherwise that the post was not taken from him. Just at this time, however, a supervising monk with very decided ideas of discipline was given charge of the boys; all the faults of disobedience, telling of falsehoods, running off to the village at forbidden hours and such like, were stored up till the end of the month. Then, on punishment day, the monk would gather a pile of sticks beside him, and all the boys with faults in a row before him, and go through beating them, one stick to one boy until it broke. One month my father was included in this row because the inroads on the meat-safe stores had increased in spite of constant warnings. Being a big boy he was left to the end of the row, and could watch the zealous monk methodically working through the boys and the sticks. What we know of my father and physical pain is that my mother was once scolded very severely the only time in her life that she beat any of us, and that he himself, when about to take nasty medicine or a vaccination, would go through a series of shiverings and comical protests, some of which I am sure were quite genuine. My poor father then watched the pile of sticks diminishing, and when there were but three sticks left and three boys between him and the untiring monk he suddenly took to his heels and fled, right out of the monastery grounds, down the pagoda hill and down to the creek. He did not dare 872 792 861

872 792 861 [775] to go home because Grandmother would have sent him back for a double beating, so he hitched up his longyi, tied his shirt round his head and swam across the stream. One of the huts on the other bank belonged to a woman who had always been very fond of him because she believed him to be a reincarnation of her brother who had died in childhood; Burmese Buddhists believe that one goes through many existences on this earth, and sometimes children are born who have not yet forgotten their previous existence by the time they can talk; they adopt habits uncannily like those of the departed member who, the fond and grieving relatives hope, has returned to them in the guise of this new child; they say "My bed", "My clothes" to the possessions of the dead person, especially if eggs are not included in their diet, the belief being that eggs cause them to forget. When we were very young, the fame of a wonder child, who could recite the most learned religious passages untaught, spread throughout Burma, and my parents travelled to hear him; he had been a monk in his past existence and could remember.

792 561 My father's case was no outstanding one like this; he had just resembled the lady's brother in looks and gesture, and a few childish utterances helped out by her belief had endeared my father to her as having been *winsa* (come in and inhabited) by her brother. The good and fond lady received the boy with open arms, agreed that he was getting too old for the monastery, and promised to go over and plead with my grandmother to take him out now and hasten his initiation ceremony into the priesthood. This was achieved and my father went back to his mother's house and prepared for the *shinbyu* as the ceremony was called.

484 177 874 The manner of his exit from the monastery, however, had made him restless. During the short period he was free, he could go where he willed, and in this way he often met traders who came and went between Ye and Tavoy, a seaport town about 100 miles away, to which passenger and cargo ships from Moulmein made regular trips. One day he was at the house on the opposite bank when a boy he used to know as a toddler returned from Tavoy after a trip to Moulmein. This boy could speak a few words of English. Moreover, he wore his hair in a *boha-dauk* (a Westerner's crop) and seemed to think my father a jungle boy. All the restlessness in my father flowed over then, because up to now he had always felt himself clever and ahead of other boys. He worried Grandmother to let him go to Moulmein and learn English, and and get a job with the government which would bring them hundreds of rupees each month. Other families who considered that Grandmother had clever sons agreed that this would be a good idea; though none of them had been to Moulmein and my father was still a boy, it would not be so daring an adventure as it sounded, because there was some one

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Burmese AP4

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which every Burman has, and carefully consults, with the help of an astrologer, for the fixing of fortunate days and hours throughout his life. Sometimes the sadā is drawn up very shortly after birth, but ordinarily not till the child is five or six years old. Then an old Pônna, a Brahmin, or any ordinary astrologer is called in. He records on a doubled up strip of palm leaf the year, the month, the day and hour at which the child was born; the name given to it; the planet in the ascendant at the moment of birth and the house in which it was at the time. This is scratched neatly on the palm leaf in the usual way with a metal style. On the other side are a number of cabalistic squares and numbers from which the future calculations may be made. There are said to be eight gyo, or planets, and from these the days of the week are named, Wednesday having a second, Yahu, which rules from mid-day to midnight. Each of the planets has its own point of the compass as follows:—

N.

Yahu. 12 Symbol—Tuskless Elephant. Wednesday, 12 P.M. to 12 A.M. Unnamed.	Thauk-kya. 21 Symbol—Guinea-Pig. Friday. Venus.	Taninganwe. 6 Symbol—Kalohn. Sunday. The Sun.
Kyathabade. 19 Symbol—Rat. Thursday. Jupiter.		Taninla. 15 Symbol—Tiger. Monday. The Moon.
Sane. 10 Symbol—Nagah. Saturday. Saturn.	Boddahu. 17 Symbol—Tusked Elephant. Wednesday, 12 A.M. to 12 P.M. Mercury.	Ainga. Symbol—Lion. Tuesday. Mars.

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The stations, numbers, and symbols of the planets are recorded in a jingling rhyme, which is one of the first things boys learn in the monastic schools, *e.g.*—

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Taninla kya
Ta-sè nga
Ne nya
She yat ga.

Monday's number, I ween,
Is always fifteen;
The tiger's the beast,
And its place is the East.

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There are various ways of calculating the horoscope, most of them not to be understanded of the people, but the most popular, because the preliminaries are evident to everybody, is from the numbers given above. A person born on Monday remains under the influence of the moon for fifteen years. Then he passes into the house of Mars and sojourns there for eight years. At the age of twenty-three, Mercury presides over him and continues to do so for the next seventeen years, and so on to the end, which mounts up to 108 years. Should he outlive that he would begin the circle over again. Another way is to divide the inquirer's age by eight. If there is no remainder, the horoscope is made up from the gyo under which he was born. If there is a remainder, the Bedin Sayā counts it out round the figure, in the direction of the hands of a watch, commencing with the birth planet. Thus a man born on Thursday, now twenty-nine years of age, would be under the influence of the moon. The gyo at the four cardinal points, east, south, west, and north are happy in their influences, those on the diagonal rhumbs not so good. Yahu, and especially Saturday, have a particularly sinister influence. A man does most of the stupid and vicious things in his life while he is in Saturn's house. A youhg man born on Wednesday will need a lot of ballast to tide him through the ten years of Saturn, seeing that he enters on the danger at the age of seventeen.

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Little gilded and red painted signboards are put up at all the pagodas, displaying the nan, the symbol, and the relative position of all the planets. Sometimes people worshipping at the pagoda go to the point of the gyo, in whose house they were born, and offer up their lauds and candles there. But this is a mere matter of individual fancy, and is hardly open to those born in the diagonally situated

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and ninepins, played with the big flat seeds of a jungle creeper. Pleasant they were under the shade of the great mango and pipul trees and the lofty cocoa-nut and palmyra palms, and exciting were the games, so that the customary stillness of the place was rudely broken upon by disputing voices, till a monk would come out and bring all back to work again as a penance. Then during the work there was the fun of the writing hour, when everybody had to write out maxims and prayers on his little parabaik with a clumsy pointed steatite pencil. There were always some stiff-fingered big pupils who could not manage to write their copy neatly or correctly, and as punishment had to take the good writers on their backs and march ruefully up and down the long schoolroom during pleasure. Sometimes they were thrashed, but the other punishment was the more dreaded. Then there was the schoolmaster monk, who would tell fairy stories of the other three great islands which lie in the sea round about Myinmo mountain; of the half-moon-faced western islanders, and the wondrous tree that bore everything eatable one could wish for and delivered it ready cooked; the joys of the six heavens of the Nats and the grisly horrors of Nga-yè, with its fearful ages of fantastic punishments. Every now and again travelling necromancers and hmaw sayās would spend a night or two at the monastery, and in recompense for the little delicacies and odds and ends of food which good-natured neophytes would get for them, used to tell stories of witchery and marvel. Sometimes there would be a sā-haw yā, a kind of cyclic poet, who knew half the zats in the language by heart, and would recite a little just for practice. Or a tattooing sayā would come round and mark some particularly favoured youth with a quaint figure. Discussion as to its meaning and probable virtues would be carried on in the shadowy evenings for months afterwards. Varieties of this kind recur to the old Burman as he thinks of the school days long ago, and he sighs with as much conviction as any European that there are no days so happy as the school days.

English rule has disturbed old customs a good deal in the province, but even now we may say that, as an invari-

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871 able rule, when a boy has reached the age of eight or nine years he goes as a matter of course to the Pôngyi Kyaung. 871 It is open to all alike—to the poor fisherman's son as well 212 as to the scion of princely blood—for no one pays anything, 792 and it is not carefully considered who it is that fills the 561 monkish begging pots in the daily round. Thus every Buddhist boy in the country is taught to read and write, and in this respect at least there are but very few illiterate Burmans. This primary education must by no means be confounded with entry into the monastery as a koyin-gale, or novice. Strictly speaking, this ceremony ought not to take place before the age of fifteen, and the earlier sojourn is only a preparation for it. The younger pupils may become boarders in the monastic building if they choose, but they do not assume the yellow robe, which marks them, for however short a time it may be worn, as members of the Assembly of the Perfect. They wear their ordinary clothes and retain their secular name.

876 As soon as the boy enters the monastery he is set down in the big schoolroom beside all the other boys, and receives 872 a roughly-made black wooden slate. On this are written a few of the letters, perhaps the whole of the alphabet. A little explanation starts him off, and for the next few days he is engaged in shouting out their sounds at the top of his voice. Nobody minds him, for all the other scholars are similarly engaged in hallooing, and the monks derive a sense of comfort and a virtuous consciousness of doing good from the noise. It is as soothing as the sound of his mill-wheels to the miller, or the roar of traffic to the cockney. If a boy stops shouting, it is a sign that he has stopped working—and if he is not meditating mischief, it is probable that he is about to go to sleep, and he is corrected accordingly. The method is an admirable one for keeping the boys occupied—much more so than civilised Western methods—though I fear a council of English head-masters would scout the idea. The casual foreign observer who goes about taking notes, like Grose or the "Rampant M.P.," passes the ecclesiastical school, and in amazement at the seeming uproar within, declares that monastery schools are hopelessly badly conducted, and without the semblance of discipline. As a

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

matter of fact, the more noise there is going on, the more work there is being got through.

Doubtless it is a primitive method—doubtless there are thick-headed boys with tough lungs who shout out the ka gyi, ka gwe (the A, B, C) with but the slightest portion of it remaining in their brains. There must be, because sometimes a boy takes a year to get through the alphabet (called the thin-bon-gyi, the "great basket of learning"), the combination of vowel symbols, and the alterations of sound effected by the union of consonants, all of which are mere materials, and only a very small portion of the complicated system of the language. Nevertheless everybody learns in the end, and then they are set to read in the same way, and gradually advance in the immemorial regulation subjects. The first books—all the books, in fact, put in the boys' hands—are religious. They learn the five universal commandments, the five subsidiary rules, the Pali formulæ to be employed at the pagoda—pattering them over till they pour out of the lips with the fluency and precision of water out of a pump. When there are a number at the same stage in their studies, they repeat their lesson word for word after the teacher, sitting in wide rows before him, and all chanting with the same emphasis and apparently in the same key. The effect is very singular when a string of sonorous Pali versicles is being mouthed over in the striking intoned recitative peculiar to these formulæ. The twenty or thirty boys crouching down on their knees, their little heads every now and then bowing down to the ground over their hands joined in supplication, the yellow-robed monk sitting cross-legged on the dais before them, repeating in abrupt, jerky fashion the clauses of the form of worship, which the childish voices instantly catch up, forms a scene which never loses its novelty and attractiveness.

The little schoolboy slowly learns all these formulæ. Even near to and in the larger towns of Lower Burma the amount of secular learning, arithmetic, and so on that is learnt, is of the most meagre possible description. All relates to the tenets of religion—to the existences and teachings of the Lord Buddha. The things thus impressed on the youthful mind sink deep into the memory, and leave their mark

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Burmese AP4

872 779 on the whole future life of the young scholars. As long as these monastic schools are attended, all attacks on the Buddhist faith must be fruitless.

872 779 792 Besides the commandments, the paya-shekho, and the pareit-yôp-thi, the lauds of the Lord Buddha, and the aspirations to be repeated at the holy shrines, the formulæ to be told over on the beads; besides these first principles, the young Burman is taught the thin-ki-ya, the rules which are to prepare him for assuming the yellow robe, and to guide him during his longer or shorter withdrawal from the sinful world to the calm tranquillity of the monastery. He must learn that the young novice carefully imitates the decorous pace of the yahan; does not walk fast; avoids swinging his hands; does not smile or laugh in passing through a village, and keeps far away from all secular amuse-
[292] ments. The yellow robe, distinctive of the order, is to be regarded not as a garment to cherish and comfort the wearer, not as a robe to adorn the outward man and make it look stately or pious, but merely as a concession to modesty, born of the weaknesses of poor human flesh—and further, as a means of enabling the worthless frame to endure the
[261] extremes of heat and cold. In the same way food is to be eaten only to support life. The member of the sacred order must not think of meal times as an occasion for gratifying his senses; he must avoid dwelling on the tastiness of the food and the gratification to his palate which the pious zeal of a supporter may afford in presenting an unusually dainty meal. Especially must he refrain from eating food to make himself strong and lusty. He must always remember the transitoriness, the misery and unreality of the world, and find relief in the Triple Consolation, the trust in the Lord, the Law, and the Assembly.

All these things are impressed on the young pupil as soon as he is able to read at all, every one of them assuming the fact that as soon as he is old enough, or as soon as he has gone through the necessary preparation, he will assume the yellow robe of the devout, to wear it perhaps for life, perhaps only for a day or two, but certainly to put it on, for
[885] without this he cannot attain to the full privileges of a man.
[777] His kan (luck) will be altogether one-sided. All the ill deeds

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Burmese AP4

All the ill deeds 872
he does will swell the sum of his demerits, but not a single 779
good action, no uttermost act of charity or devotion, will be 792
recorded to his advantage for another existence. Without 775
admission to the order, without "Buddhist baptism," no man 186
can count his present existence as other than an animal's. The great gift of having appeared in the likeness of a human being; the happy balancing of merits and demerits which has resulted in so glorious an opportunity of advancing towards Ne'-ban; the still greater fortune of existence in a country where the tenets of Buddhism offer supreme chances to the weary seeker after rest from the moil of a work-a-day world; all will have been recklessly thrown away. It is written that more hardly will a needle cast from the summit of Mount Myinmo across the wide Thamoddaya Sea, more hardly will it touch with its point as it falls another needle standing point upwards in the great Southern Island, than will any given creature become a human being. How are the Western foreigners, black and white, to be pitied, who have indeed by earnest strivings attained the seat of man, but, arrived there, find it all naught because they do not hear the teachings of the Buddha! How much worse the Burman, to whom all his life long the monastery door stands open, to whom a week's, a day's, an hour's sojourn would offer boundless possibilities, and yet who enters not in. If this be so, what then can be the prospect for the boy who having put his hand to the plough turns back, who entering the monastery as a child, imbibes the religious thoughts and becomes acquainted with the religious creed, and yet fails to seek the "humanity" so easily to be gained? Better have been born an animal or an Englishman, and scoffed at what he did not understand.

Consequently it may be invariably assumed that the 871
little scholar, as soon as age and acquirements admit, puts 792
on the yellow garb as a finish to his education. This used 177.87
to include every one. Till the English came and took the country, everybody went to the Pon-gyi-Kyaung. But now there are English government schools; there are Burmese laymen's schools, which neglect religious education altogether, and look to competitive examinations as the end and aim of juvenile existence, as the ne'-ban of school life.

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Burmese AP4
Lower Burma

important age for the boy to be learning English and arithmetic, with a view to getting situations under Government or in English merchants' offices. Therefore in the vast majority of cases shin-pyu thi takes place at the age of twelve, or perhaps even a year earlier.

If the boy has been a scholar in the monastery beforehand, he is sure to be already prepared in all that is required of him. If not, he gets a few hasty lessons in the duties that will be incumbent on him. He must address a full member of the order in such and such language; he must walk decorously through the streets, keeping his eyes fixed on the ground six feet before him, and on no account gaze round him, no matter what exciting events may be going on; he must wear his thingan and du-gut in the prescribed fashion; he must eat with dignity and circumspection, and so on. All these details are set forth in most minute fashion in a code. When he has mastered the most essential portions, and has also given proof of an acquaintance with the ordinary forms of worship, all is ready. His horoscope now comes into requisition, and a bedinsayā or Ponna is called in to determine a lucky day and hour from the sadā. When this has been settled, three or four girls, the intending koyin-gale's sisters, or friends of the family, dress themselves up in their finest silks and jewels—often borrowing a large quantity of the latter—and go round the town, announcing to all relatives, friends, and neighbours when the induction will take place, and inviting them to the feast, presenting the little packet of le'-pet usual on such occasions. Almost all of these send some little present, either of money or victuals, to aid in the feast and make it as grand as possible. Not unseldom, if somebody else's son is also going to enter the kyaung and the town is not very large, the two join forces, while occasionally as many as half a dozen unite, especially if the families are not well off.

On the appointed day the young neophyte dresses in his finest clothes, and loads himself with all the family gold chains and jewellery, and as much more as he can borrow for the occasion. He then mounts a pony or gets into a richly decorated car. Shaded by gold umbrellas, allowed formerly on this occasion only in Upper Burma, except to those who had got a special patent for them from the sovereign...

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

643 Some thirty people about the Court were beheaded, and the queen dowager was relegated to the convent.

643 177·64 872 Thibaw himself was brought up in an uncle's house and used to be unmercifully bullied by his cousins. When Dr. Marks, the eminent S.P.G. missionary, came to Mandalay and established a school, the late king asked what was the best age for a Burman to commence learning English. The reverend gentleman said, "About twelve years old." King Mindôn called for "all his sons that were twelve years old or thereabouts." Eleven were produced, and among them was Thibaw. The future king went to the royal school, but he sat apart from his late victims, and never came to school on the same elephant with them. He was a surly, morose boy, not very good at his lessons, and once or twice narrowly escaped the usual result of such conduct. I believe he was never actually birched, but he had several times to stand in the corner. When he left he was able to read a little, but he has forgotten all his English now. He used to be fond of cricket, and slogged away in fairly good pendulum form; but he never would field out, and used unprincely language to any one who bowled him. He was the youngest of the batch by a month or two, and was always quarrelling with his brothers and bullying the wretched slave who attended him and carried his cheroots and betel-nut. But nobody paid much attention to his vagaries then, for he was twentieth or thirtieth son, and the Mekhaya prince, the eldest, might very easily have been his father, or even grandfather.

643 792 After he left the S.P.G. Royal School, King Mindôn made him a koyin, a neophant, in the royal monastery. There he seemed to get on better. At any rate when his novitiate was over, he passed with honours as Patama Kyaw, an examination in the Bitaghat thônbông, the three "baskets" of the Buddhist law, and sundry other volumes of ritual and controversy. This was what first drew the old king's attention to him. Mindôn Min was a very pious old gentleman, and had a particular delight in his title of Convener of the Fifth Great Synod. When therefore young Thibaw made a score in the Turanian Theological Tripos, his father bored everybody with his talk about the juvenile

14: Brant E-5 (1949-50) 1954 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

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large amounts of food. The married women prepare food, serve, and entertain the guests, while the unmarried girls assist them. If a ceremony involves a procession, the unmarried girls bear the gifts which are invariably taken to the monks on such occasions.

These 'groups' are so informal and loosely organized that in the strict sociological sense they should not be so designated; rather, they are simply the conventional lines along which cooperation takes place and labor is divided, in a spirit of mutual aid, whenever a family sponsors a ceremony -- an occasion involving much work. Each is willing to help, for when his own family sponsors an event, similar assistance will be expected and forthcoming.

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Education. In addition to the Buddhist monastic schools, to be discussed in the next chapter, there is a small secular school in the village. This is operated on a voluntary basis by a middle-aged schoolmaster, a widower, who migrated, together with his daughter, to Tadagale two years ago. It is his hope that eventually the school will be incorporated into the regular school system, as compulsory education is gradually extended to the country. The school is financed wholly by voluntary contributions. The village headman personally contributes ten rupees per month, his brother gives a like amount, and the Bus Union donates five rupees. From this income of twenty-five rupees per month ($5.25) the schoolmaster pays five rupees for his house rent and provides blackboard chalk and his own books and pencils. On what remains, plus a little profit he derives from maintaining a small shop in his house, he must support his daughter and himself. But he is confident that once compulsory education is extended to Tadagale, his sacrificial efforts of the present will be rewarded by a regular appointment at Rs. 100 per month, an expanded program of instruction, and perhaps the services of an assistant. For the present he operates the school without any responsibilities to superiors, devising his own curriculum and teaching according to his own methods. The schoolmaster was himself once a student at a normal school in Moulmein.

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About eighty children attend the school with varying degrees of regularity. The average daily attendance is about sixty. The schoolmaster feels that many more children of school-age living in the community should attend, but finds that parents are reluctant to send their children. Some feel they are needed for household and field labor; others prefer what they regard as the stricter environment of the monastic school, with its great emphasis upon religion and correct conduct. The schoolmaster deplores the ignorance and negative attitudes of villagers concerning education, and their unwillingness to contribute financially to the maintenance of his school.

Instruction is given in five grades or 'standards' as they are called in Burma. These are termed 1B, 1A, 2, 3, and 4.

Standard 1B is equivalent to the kindergarten of the pre-World War II schools. The schoolmaster has divided the class into two sections, one for the children of seven to eight years who already can read to some extent, the other for the younger ones of four to six who cannot. According to the rules of the government schools six years is the minimum school age, but the schoolmaster in Tadagale is not bound by such regulations. He teaches these two groups of kindergarteners according to their own levels and at the pace which he thinks appropriate. They learn the alphabet and simple numbers at first, later moving on to reading and spelling. No regular allocation of time to different subjects is possible, since the schoolmaster must teach this and four other classes without any assistance.

In Standard 1A, numerals up to one hundred and the various arithmetic operations are taught. Reading is done from a primer which contains fifteen commandments of the Buddha in Pali, with Burmese translations. In addition, a more advanced reader is used, containing sermons of the Buddha in both languages. The children in this class range in age from six to thirteen years, the average being nine. 872 ●

The next class, Standard 2, provides further reading in the sermons and precepts of Buddhism, arithmetic ranging into high numbers, multiplication tables up to sixteen, and sums involving money. The geography of Burma is introduced. The pupils average ten and a half years.

More advanced arithmetic, reading of historical tales, and more advanced geography are included in the curriculum of Standard 3, the pupils of which average in age about the same as those in Standard 2. Hygiene is begun, literally called 'lessons to insure good health.' Besides cleanliness, the children learn proper postures for sitting, sleeping, and eating. Exercises in Burmese grammar are given by mass recitation -- which is the method of teaching all subjects. Another subject is the writing of letters and social invitations.

Children ranging from ten to fourteen years are in Standard 4. They use an advanced reader containing Buddhist sermons and history. Their arithmetic includes weights and measures, land measurement, and simple interest calculations. There is more emphasis on writing of letters and essays.

The school building is simply a vacant house. The entire school group is assembled at the same time, seated on the floor. The lessons of the different standards are recited one after another. While one standard is engaged in recitation, the other pupils are expected to study, or at least remain quiet. On the religious duty days, and of course on the holidays, the school is not in session.

This school contributes to the literacy of the village, although in large measure the high literacy here and generally in Burma, as compared with India and China, is attributable to the monastic schools. In Tadagale, 357 of a total of 640 persons, eight years of age and above, on whom literacy data could be secured, were literate. This is 55%. The criterion of literacy employed was ability to read a newspaper in some language. Of the 331 men in this number, 251 were literate, or nearly 76%. Women, however, were only 34% literate. Literacy in English is rare in the village; there were but twelve persons who could read an English language newspaper, and of these, nine were men. 872 212

Tadagale's proximity to Rangoon, where several newspapers are published, gives villagers access to the press. In fact, a few vendors of the metropolitan newspapers sell them in the community. Few persons buy them, but these copies receive very wide circulation. A survey of newspaper reading, carried out among those claiming literacy indicated a frequency range from zero to daily reading of newspapers. The largest group, nearly a third, both men and women, read a paper once or twice a week, while another 20% read one twice or three times a month. 10% reported never reading papers, while 16% claimed to be daily readers. 212 204

Intergroup Relations

As indicated earlier, about 6% of the population of Tadagale consists of Indians, some of them born in Burma. The Indian inhabitants came to the village 563

792 871 the small boys, as day pupils. Monastic education is a traditional part of Burmese Buddhism, and almost all the men of Tadagale, whether reared in the village or elsewhere, have attended monastic schools for varying lengths of time.

792 872 876 The monastic school curriculum includes elementary reading, writing and arithmetic, rudiments of history and geography, heavily colored by Burmese cosmology and folklore, and instruction in Buddhist precepts and proper conduct. There is heavy emphasis upon proper conduct. Instruction takes the form of mass recitation and rote memorization. Discipline is strict and the inattentive pupil is kept alert, when necessary, by means of the rod. As indicated earlier, many parents in the village favor the monastic as against the public school because of the strict discipline and the emphasis upon conduct and religion.

793 Concerning the second function of the monks, officiation at certain rites, it should be indicated that because Burmese Buddhism is not a congregational type of religion, the monks are not called upon to officiate at regular assemblies in any fashion akin to the role of the Christian minister. The monks do, however, play an important part in the initiation of boys into the monkhood; and sometimes take part in funeral rites.

The monk's function of giving advice and guidance stems from the fact that he is regarded, in the thinking of the villagers, not only as one to whom the greatest respect and deference is due by virtue of his dedication to his life to religion, but also as a living repository of wisdom and universal knowledge. He is a person to whom one may turn in time of uncertainty, doubt or stress for personal counsel. Problems relating to the conduct of one's children; concern over persistent lack of success in one's economic activities; or even matters of health may be taken to the monk. A great deal of the advice rendered by monks is formulaic, folkloristic and magical in nature. Particular monks tend to acquire reputations as being especially wise and helpful in particular kinds of problems.

792 235 Support of the Monks. The monastery buildings and the land on which they stand are the property of the monastic order, held in perpetuity by grant of the government, free of taxation.

The monks are supported by the donations of the villagers. Every morning a monk, accompanied by one or two monastic school pupils, passes through the village to collect offerings of food. As he enters the compound of each home a member of the household takes a pot of cooked rice, which has been prepared for the morning meal, and places a few large spoonsful in the monk's begging bowl. This minimum daily contribution of food is made by every Buddhist household, without exception; in addition, many families send bowls of curry and rice to the monastery. Giving food to the monks is an [624] important act of merit to Burmese Buddhists. It is regarded as unthinkable that any household would refuse. When the hypothetical case was posed of such a deviant household, villagers agreed that such a family would be severely criticized and shunned in the village.

The few other things that the monks require for their austere existence are given by villagers on the important ceremonial days of the year. These items include robes, soap, matches, begging bowls, water strainers and needles.

796 Duty Days. The Burmese calendar is a lunar one, and in each month there are four days -- duty or sabbath days -- on which the villagers go to the monastery

342 514 In U Myaing's house the lavatory is in the kitchen and is walled off with woven KYU (kind of fiber) mat. There is a hole cut open in the board flooring, and the area underneath this opening also is walled off with woven KYU. U Myaing and family did not take their meals in the kitchen but in the house proper.

361 368 346 [872] [764] The PHON-GYI KYAUNG or monastery is located further downstream from the village. It is a two storied brick building comprised of nine rooms, each 6 TAUNG square. Children are not taught here but learn their lessons at the government school. This school, which is on YWA-GYI-BET side, teaches pupils up to the tenth standard. Below the PHON-GYI KYAUNG is the cemetery.

The houses in the village are separated one from the other by eight feet on each side. The rows of houses facing the river have porches on 342 both sides. U Myaing's house is typical of those found in the village - some may be more elaborate, some less. His house had been built only 435 [651] six or seven years, and cost Rs. 3000/- at that time. There are no accounts for each of the separate items and U Myaing does not remember. The land was free and they did not have to pay any revenue on it.

[366] [252] Separate from the houses and on the riverside is a huge platform built to process fish including the making of NGAPI. U Myaing had no land that he owned round the house, although he could use the land directly in front of the house for various purposes.

U Myaing describes his house as follows;

342 592 "It is a wooden house, made of wooden posts - a two storied structure. The roof is of slates. Walls are of SHI-HMA-NU wooden boards (boards 8 inches wide and about ½ inch thick) and there are four rooms. Other people have similar houses. It is a LAY-BIN-KIN (a four-tree-house or a house which has four supporting poles across the frame) and all seven of us live in the house. We drop a kitchen from the back and cook there. The kitchen has three windows at the back, with one door leading into the house. We all live together in three rooms. We keep bedrooms. (U Myaing is speaking of a sketch of the house here). This side is for visitors - there is a room for people who come to buy goods. The [366] old mother and the children live in one room and I and my wife in another with the smallest child. We eat in the front part of the house in one room at the foot of the sleeping place. There are nine 6 TAUNG rooms without partitions on each of the two floors. The sides of the house are enclosed with timber planks of IN wood, but the bedrooms are also partitioned off. It is very wide and roomy to live in. The floor is made of teak planks."